



## *Facilitator's Guide to the Family & Community Engagement Module*

Thank you for your commitment to SBDM and for training the council members attending your session(s). As a reminder *Family & Community Engagement* is designed as a three (3) hour session for experienced members.

The attached *Facilitator's Guide* includes a script, as well as accompanying answer keys and notes. The script itself is discretionary and serves as a guide only; the answers are samples. Feel free to create your own transitions between topics and to facilitate discussions to your comfort level; you are not bound by the script itself. Most of the activities and readings require mandatory engagement, so passive learning and *sit and get* are not recommended. Encourage your trainees to take notes, highlight, annotate, and interact with the words on the pages.

Should you find any incorrect information or need clarification on an activity or would like to provide feedback on the module, feel free to contact your SBDM Consultants at (502) 564-3791.

Again, *thank you*.

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### **Sample Agenda:**

- I. Introductions & Session Overview
- II. Engagement vs. Involvement
- III. Missing Piece of the Proficiency Puzzle
- IV. Barriers to Family & Community Engagement
- V. Break
- VI. Is Your School Friendly?
- VII. Family Engagement Policies
- VIII. Next Steps
- IX. Closing/Evaluations/EILAS

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### **Needed Materials:**

- Booklet for each participant
- Computer for PowerPoint presentation (optional)
- Sign-in sheet
- Nametags or name tents
- Evaluations
- EILA certificates
- Post-Its (optional)
- Chart paper (optional)
- Markers (optional)
- *The Missing Piece of the Proficiency Puzzle* (optional)

**FYI:** The policy examples and survey referenced in this module are made available independently of the training module should anyone express interest in the materials. They can be found on the [SBDM training page](#) underneath the heading *Family & Community Engagement*.

After welcoming participants, provide each person with a copy of the training booklet. Spend time reviewing the objectives below, which set the stage for the information that follows. This is also a key time to note that the training is designed to last 3 hours to satisfy the legal requirement. Explain that during this training session, council members will spend time discussing how to better engage families and the community in the school's processes. Remind council members the booklet belongs to them and encourage them to take notes and interact with the pages.



## KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### *Family and Community Engagement*

*A three (3) hour training for experienced SBDM members*

#### **Objectives:**

*After this training, council members will be able to...*

- Differentiate between engagement and involvement
- Understand what *The Missing Piece of the Proficiency Puzzle* proposes
- Determine the barriers to family and community engagement and how to address them
- Assess whether their school has a friendly, welcoming atmosphere
- Understand parent involvement policies must ensure effective family engagement

#### **Session Overview:**

Connections between schools and the resources that exist in a community can support a shared responsibility between the schools, the families and community in their collective efforts to increase student achievement. According to the National Parental Information and Resource Center, "Research over the past 30 years has shown that engaging families in their children's education increases student achievement and decreases dropout rates. Effective family engagement is not a one-time program or the choice of a good school, but rather a set of day-to-day practices, attitudes, beliefs and interactions that support learning at home, at school, afterschool and during the summer. To ensure that the students of today are ready for the careers of tomorrow, families, schools, and community groups need to work together to promote engagement that is systemic, sustained, and integrated into school improvement efforts." ([www.nationalpirc.org](http://www.nationalpirc.org))

#### **Student Achievement:**

The school council's mission is to improve student achievement [KRS 160.345(2)c]. Each school council must create an environment in its school that will result in students achieving at high levels. All policies and decisions by the school council must contribute to achievement of the overall school's mission.

## Engagement vs. Involvement

Being engaged and being involved are two *very* different ideas. Before we study how to improve family and community engagement in your school, we first must understand the difference between engagement and involvement.

**Directions:** Circle the correct answer for each definition.

1. A collaborative partnership between the parents and school is \_\_\_\_\_.  
☒ a. Engagement  
b. Involvement
2. *Doing to* refers to:  
a. Engagement  
☒ b. Involvement
3. Participation of parents in regular, two-way and meaningful communication is \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. Engagement  
☒ b. Involvement
4. *Doing with* refers to \_\_\_\_\_.  
☒ a. Engagement  
b. Involvement
5. Doing what educators ask or expect parents to do is \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. Engagement  
☒ b. Involvement
6. Which one produces better results?  
☒ a. Engagement  
b. Involvement
7. A partnership with parents in which they bring their own knowledge into schools is \_\_\_\_\_.  
☒ a. Engagement  
b. Involvement

Once the participants have had enough time to complete the short quiz, review the answers with them and facilitate discussions (as needed). After the opening activity has been completed, have several volunteers read the article excerpt below. Provide answers that fill the blanks in the participants' booklets. Encourage participants to highlight and take notes while reading.



To create the kinds of school-family partnerships that raise student achievement, improve local communities, and increase public support, we need to understand the difference between family *involvement* and family *engagement*. One of the dictionary definitions of *involve* is "to enfold or envelope," whereas one of the meanings of *engage* is "to come together and interlock." Thus, involvement implies [DOING TO](#); in contrast, engagement implies [DOING WITH](#).

A school [striving for family involvement](#) often leads with its mouth—identifying projects, needs, and goals and then telling parents how they can contribute. A [school striving for parent engagement](#), on the other hand, tends to lead with its [EARS](#)—listening to what parents think, dream, and worry about. [The goal of family engagement is not to serve clients but to gain partners.](#)

It's [not that family involvement is bad](#). Almost all the research says that any kind of increased parent interest and support of students can help. But almost all the research also says that [family engagement can produce even better results—for students, for families, for schools, and for their communities.](#)

**Source:** Ferlazzo, Larry. "Involvement or Engagement?" *Schools, Families, Communities* 68, no. 8 (2011): 10-14.

## ***The Missing Piece of the Proficiency Puzzle***

Kentucky's definition of **parent or family** consists of a *natural, adoptive or foster parent; other adult serving as a parent, such as a close relative; legal or educational guardian; and/or a community or agency advocate*. The definition of **parent**, as it relates to the parent representative on the school council, based on KRS 160.345(1)(d) as a *parent, stepparent or foster parent of a student or a person who has legal custody of a student pursuant to a court order and with whom the student resides*.

From the beginning of the Commissioner's Parent Advisory Council (CPAC), under Commissioner Wilmer Cody in 1999, the group's purpose has been to advise the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) on policy issues and to increase parent leadership for improving public education. CPAC has over 30 parent members from across the state, selected at the discretion of the commissioner. On March 30, 2006, then-Commissioner Gene Wilhoit gave CPAC members this instruction: "My goal is outstanding practice to involve parents in every school in Kentucky. Your charge is to pull together an agenda for the state and produce a document that builds on what exists and pushes us to a higher level."

Building on our state's long experience with reform, CPAC strongly recommended that Kentucky become the first state in the nation to set a standard for family and community involvement that is focused on improving student achievement. This standard includes six objectives designed to involve families and the community to improve student achievement. For school council members, this document can provide a framework as you strive to increase parent, family and community involvement in your school.

To answer Commissioner Wilhoit's charge, CPAC developed the document *The Missing Piece of the Proficiency Puzzle*. Within the document, CPAC proposes specific school-level descriptors. These descriptors include provisions that every student in Kentucky will have a parent, or another adult, who knows how to support that student's academic achievement. The objectives are as follows:

- **RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING:** *The school staff builds productive, personal relationships with parents of all students.*
- **COMMUNICATIONS:** *Two-way information in many forms flows regularly between school staff and parents about students' academic achievement and individual needs.*
- **DECISION-MAKING:** *School staff encourages, supports and expects parents to be involved in school improvement decisions and to monitor and assist school improvement.*
- **ADVOCACY:** *For each student, the school staff identifies and supports a parent or other adult who can take personal responsibility for understanding and speaking for that child's learning needs.*
- **LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES:** *The school staff ensures that families have multiple opportunities to understand how to support their children's learning.*
- **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:** *The school staff engages and partners with community members to plan and implement substantive work to improve student achievement.*

Building on these objectives and findings, CPAC members recommended that Kentucky become the first state to adopt comprehensive school performance descriptors for family and community involvement focused on improving student achievement. The appendix of *The Missing Piece of the Proficiency Puzzle* contains these descriptors.

The second objective is **communication**. Look at the descriptors for proficient. What actions do you see? How can this relate to school council work?

Have council members partner up and after having read the proficiency statements in column I (as they relate to the objective Communications), have them determine what actions the council can take in fulfilling its role at proficiently communicating.

PROFICIENT	SCHOOL COUNCIL'S ROLE
<i>School staff <b>implements</b> systematic efforts to inform parents about academic goals, class work, grades and homework for their children in their home language.</i>	School council policy (e.g., parent involvement policy, instructional practices policy) can include a systematic process for informing parents about curriculum, instruction, homework expectations and academic progress.
<i>School staff <b>offers</b> varied ways that parents can <b>share information</b> with teachers about their children's learning needs.</i>	Assignment of instructional and non-instructional staff time policy can require teachers to conduct parent-teacher conferences based on a yearly schedule (unless part of a bargaining contract).
<i>School staff <b>partners</b> with community leaders and organizations to <b>build</b> parent understanding of academic expectations, school strategies and student achievement results.</i>	School council policy (e.g., parent involvement policy, instructional practices policy) can include a systematic process for informing parents about curriculum, instruction, homework expectations and academic progress.
<i>School staff <b>offers</b> parents opportunities to <b>discuss</b> school-wide achievement issues, including assessment data, at least once a semester.</i>	Assignment of instructional and non-instructional staff time policy can require teachers to conduct parent-teacher conferences based on a yearly schedule (unless part of a bargaining contract).
<i>School staff <b>implements</b> systematic efforts to maximize parent-teacher conference participation.</i>	School council can collaborate with the school's parent-teacher organization to promote and assist with conferences (e.g., provide child care, discuss with constituents, and provide transportation).
<i>At least 50 percent of parents <b>respond</b> to annual school and/or district shareholder surveys.</i>	School council can collaborate with the school's parent-teacher organization to promote and assist with distribution and collection of school surveys.
<i>Shareholder survey data is consistently used to <b>plan</b> school improvement efforts and to <b>evaluate</b> their effectiveness.</i>	Annually, school council members can survey families and the community during the school improvement planning process or include questions in previous surveys that would provide the needed data and input.

After 15→20 minutes review answers with council members. Have pairs share responses aloud with the entire group.

**Reflection:** *How can our school council include ideas and opinions from the school's shareholders?*

ANSWERS WILL VARY.

Should council members show interest, the entire report can be found by visiting the [SBDM training page](#). (Look underneath the module's title.)

Say: Before we begin planning steps on how to engage parents, families, and the community in the school, we need to explore the reasons that parents, families, and/or the community do not participate in the educational programs in a school. (Direct council members to the highlighted section below and have them complete the tasks that follow.)

## Barriers to Family and Community Engagement

Before we can begin planning steps to engage parents, families and the community in the school, we need to explore the reasons that parents, families, and/or the community do not participate in the educational programs in a school.

As a table/group, look at the chart of roadblocks for parent, family or community involvement. What are some *detours* that schools and school councils can take to address and knock down the roadblocks?

	ROADBLOCK	DETOUR
<b>TIME</b>	<p><i>Parents often cite time as the greatest barrier to volunteering, attending meetings and joining decision-making committees at their child's school.</i></p> <p><i>These activities often are scheduled at times that interfere with work or other obligations.</i></p>	<p>Be flexible in scheduling meetings and events.</p> <p>Try a mix of morning, evening and weekends to allow every parent the opportunity to attend.</p> <p>Consider potluck dinners and brown bag lunches to meet the needs of working parents.</p> <p>Hold meetings at community centers, apartment buildings, church halls, parks, libraries and the workplace to make it easier for parents to attend.</p> <p>Sponsor monthly community family events and use part of the time to hold a meeting to give information to parents and discuss important issues.</p>
<b>NOT VALUED</b>	<p><i>Some parents are not sure they have anything of value to contribute.</i></p> <p><i>Parents may feel intimidated by principals, teachers and other leaders, including school council representatives.</i></p> <p><i>These parents may have had an unpleasant school experience or may have limited education or low literacy levels.</i></p> <p><i>Parents whose experience with the law has been negative also may be reluctant or embarrassed to participate in some school or programs that now require fingerprints for regular volunteers.</i></p> <p><i>Educators and administrators can reinforce these feelings if they consider uninvolved parents lacking in certain qualities or deficient in some ways.</i></p>	<p>Extend a personal welcome to parents who appear to be withdrawn or uncomfortable.</p> <p>Establish regular communication to build relationships with parents based on mutual respect and trust.</p> <p>This kind of relationship can help shed light on what is going on at home that may impact a parent being able to participate in school activities, such as dealing with a family illness, aging parent, or financial stress.</p> <p>Learn about their interests and abilities; actively seek opportunities at home or at school for parents to use their experience and talents to benefit the school in some way, and then value each and every contribution.</p> <p>For parents with low literacy levels, schools can make phone calls or home visits or provide video messages.</p> <p>Schools can work with local libraries to form literacy groups and provide adult literacy and English as a second language.</p>



<p><b>UNWELCOMED FEELING</b></p>	<p><i>Parents may feel they are unwelcome in the school.</i></p> <p><i>Staff interactions, attitudes and the physical appearance of some schools may convey an unwelcoming environment.</i></p>	<p>Provide training to help all staff develop an awareness of the importance of parent involvement and acquire the knowledge and skills to successfully interact with parents.</p> <p>Communicate to parents that they are welcome to visit during the school day and that measures such as visitor's passes are there for security reasons.</p> <p>Post welcome signs in all languages spoken at the school at each entrance.</p> <p>Create a special place in the school that is set-aside especially for parents.</p> <p>Don't wait for parents to offer to help; seek them out.</p> <p>Have teachers create a list of qualities and contributions that are needed from parents.</p>
<p><b>NOT UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL SYSTEM</b></p>	<p><i>Some parents believe they have talents but don't know whether they are needed or how to contribute them to the school.</i></p> <p><i>Many parents are unfamiliar with the system and therefore do not know what their rights are or how they can become involved.</i></p>	<p>Create a parent handbook covering rules, procedures, policies, and where to find answers to questions.</p> <p>Include names and numbers of contact people who can answer questions in specific areas. Include pictures and names of school administrators, staff, PTA/PTO officers, SBDM members and other contact people.</p>
<p><b>FAMILY IN NEED</b></p>	<p><i>Parents without adequate resources often feel overwhelmed.</i></p> <p><i>Families suffering from economic stress must address their own needs for food, clothing and shelter before they can become more involved in their children's education.</i></p>	<p>Provide information to help parents access and secure the health and social services they need for themselves and their families.</p> <p>Schools can work out agreements with social and health agencies to provide services at the school through school-based clinics.</p> <p>Schools can develop and distribute to parents a directory with contact information on available services and resources in the community and how to access them.</p> <p>After families' personal needs are met, schools can then help parents become involved in the education of their children.</p>

<b>CHILDCARE</b>	<p><i>Childcare may not be offered at meetings or school functions.</i></p> <p><i>At times, parents may be discouraged from bringing their children to events.</i></p>	<p>Find an available room for childcare at the meeting site.</p> <p>Ask PTA members, community members, school service clubs or other parents to volunteer to provide childcare on a rotating basis.</p> <p>Hire high school or college students in child development classes or child care professionals in the community to provide childcare and, if appropriate, charge parents a nominal fee.</p> <p>Adhere to state-mandated child/adult ratios to provide safe, quality care.</p>
<b>LANGUAGE</b>	<p><i>Parents who don't speak English may not understand newsletters, flyers or speakers at meetings.</i></p>	<p>Provide printed materials that are sent home and passed out at meetings in all languages spoken by the families in the school.</p> <p>The school and surrounding community may need to identify and help secure interpreters and translators for workshops and meetings.</p>
<b>PARENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS</b>	<p><i>Parents with disabilities may find it difficult or feel uncomfortable attending and contributing at meetings.</i></p>	<p>Make sure that your school is accessible for everyone and hold meetings or events in a space that is accommodating to parents with disabilities.</p>
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<p><i>Lack of transportation or access to parking at the school keeps parents from visiting or attending school activities.</i></p>	<p>Work with the school to make a block of spaces in the parking lot "for visitors only."</p> <p>Form carpools to provide transportation to parents without cars.</p> <p>Hold events in community locations that are easy to get to and are near public transportation.</p>

As an **alternative** to having each pair or table group complete the entire chart, you could assign certain topics in column I and have pairs/groups present their findings to the entire training class. Responses could be displayed on chart paper and placed around the room. This could help facilitate thoughtful discussion and interaction. While pairs/groups are presenting, those who are listening could record answers in their booklets in the blank spaces.



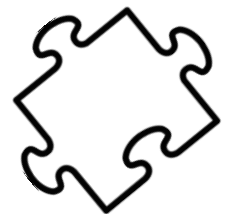
**Reflection:** *What are the barriers for family and community engagement at your school? How can you address these as a school council member?*

ANSWERS WILL VARY.

Say: Let's now turn our attention to determining whether the school where you work or where your children attend sets a friendly tone. (Have a participant read the highlighted section aloud.)

### Is Your School Friendly?

Studies of effective schools find that the *tone* the school establishes from the moment someone enters the parking lot sets the tone for the rest of the school. When schools welcome parents, families and the community and establish those relationships early by encouraging collaboration, students do better in school and schools improve. The checklist on the following pages was developed by the Center on Parent Leadership to help schools determine whether it establishes a welcoming tone:



Allow participants 15→20 minutes to complete the survey and the reflection questions on page 11. Contingent upon comfort level, participants can share ratings aloud and their thoughts on the reflection questions or they can engage in small group discussions at their tables.



## Family-Friendly School Checklist

**Directions:** Read each of the statements below and choose the number that corresponds to your school.

<b>4:</b> <i>Already doing this</i>	<b>2:</b> <i>This would take some time</i>
<b>3:</b> <i>Could do this easily</i>	<b>1:</b> <i>This would be really difficult</i>

### Welcoming Environment

<i>Friendly signs inside and out welcome families and visitors and explain how to get around the building. <b>Extra Credit:</b> A parent help desk is just inside the main entrance.</i>	
<i>The school has standards of welcoming behavior that apply to all staff, including bus drivers, security guards, custodians and cafeteria workers.</i>	
<i>Front office staff is friendly – recognize visitors right away, provide information easily and answer the phone in a way that makes callers glad they have called.</i>	
<i>A comfortable family resource room where parents can meet is stocked with books, games and educational information that families can borrow.</i>	
<b>TOTAL SCORE:</b> <small>(add one point if the extra credit applies)</small>	_____

### Programs and Activities to Engage Families in Improving Student Achievement

<i>Current student work is displayed throughout the building. Exhibits clearly explain the purpose of the work and the high standards the work should reflect.</i>	
<i>All programs and activities for families focus on student achievement – they help families understand what their children are learning and promote high standards.</i>	
<i>Special workshops, learning kits and other activities show families how to help their children at home – and respond to what families say they want to know about.</i>	
<i>The school reports to parents about student progress and how teachers, parents and community members can work together to make improvements.</i>	
<b>TOTAL SCORE:</b>	_____

### Strong Relationships between Teachers and Families

<i>A “joining process” welcomes families to the school, offers tours and introduces them to staff and other families. <b>Extra Credit:</b> Bilingual speakers are available to help families.</i>	
<i>Frequent opportunities for teachers and families to meet face-to-face and get to know each other – class meetings, breakfasts, home visits, class observations – are provided.</i>	
<i>Teachers or advisors make personal contact with each family at least once a month.</i>	
<i>A family liaison helps teachers connect to families and bridge barriers of language and culture.</i>	
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>TOTAL SCORE:</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(add one point if the extra credit applies)</i></p>	_____

### Developing Families’ Self-Confidence and Power

<i>Families are involved in planning how they would like to be involved at the school.</i>	
<i>School committees and the PTA/PTO reflect the diversity of the school community and actively recruit and welcome families from all backgrounds.</i>	
<i>The school is open and accessible – it is easy for parents to meet with the principal, talk to teachers and counselors, and bring up issues and concerns.</i>	
<i>Parents develop school improvement projects and do action research – survey other families, observe in classrooms, review materials and visit other schools and programs.</i>	
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>TOTAL SCORE:</b></p>	_____

### Professional Development for Families and Staff

<i>Families learn how the school system works and how to be an effective advocate for their child. <b>Extra Credit:</b> Each student has a student support team that includes parent(s).</i>	
<i>Teachers learn about effective approaches to working with families of diverse cultural backgrounds.</i>	
<i>Families and staff have opportunities to learn together how to collaborate to improve student achievement.</i>	
<i>The school reaches out to identify and draw in local community resources that can assist staff and families.</i>	
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>TOTAL SCORE:</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(add one point if the extra credit applies)</i></p>	_____
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Total Score for the Entire Checklist:</b></p>	_____

## Scoring Guide

A	70-80	<i>You're a family friendly school!</i>
B	60-69	<i>With a little more work, you'll be there.</i>
C	50-59	<i>Focus on the easiest areas, and then tackle the harder ones.</i>
D	40-49	<i>You may need outside help. Pull together an action team.</i>

**Directions:** Look back at the checklist and action words from the *Communication* section of *The Missing Piece of the Proficiency Puzzle* and complete the reflections questions below:

QUESTION	ANSWER
<i>1. With which areas are you doing well?</i>	ANSWERS WILL VARY.
<i>2. Which ones will need more work?</i>	ANSWERS WILL VARY.
<i>3. What can the school council do to make the school more welcoming?</i>	ANSWERS WILL VARY.
<i>4. What are your major concerns right now?</i>	ANSWERS WILL VARY.
<i>5. Are there other objectives from The Missing Piece of the Proficiency Puzzle that need to be focused and improved on in your council?</i>	ANSWERS WILL VARY.

Say: When schools and families work together, students are inclined to achieve. Let's take a look at some of Kentucky's core beliefs on family involvement and how councils can assist. (Have volunteers take turns reading the below sections.)

## Family Engagement Policies

Research shows that when schools work together with families to support learning, children are inclined to succeed not just in school, but also throughout life. Participation of families is critical throughout a child's entire academic career.

Kentucky believes that in order to ensure effective family involvement for building capacity, **the school** should...

- Assist parents in understanding Kentucky's assessment and their child's performance
- Provide training and materials to help parents work with their children to improve their achievement
- Implement and coordinate parent programs
- Inform parents about school activities and meetings in a language they can understand
- Offer meetings at a variety of times and places to encourage parent involvement

**School councils** may wish to include some of the following activities as part of a school's family engagement plan:

- Establish a volunteer program for parents and community members that gives volunteers specific and meaningful tasks.
- Ask for volunteers with specific interests, hobbies or jobs that they would be willing to share with students as a classroom resource.
- Involve civic clubs, businesses and community organizations in school projects. Ask for their help and resources for specific school events (e.g., career days, science fairs).
- Ask local businesses to set up simulations with groups of students to simulate real-life learning experiences.

## Informing Families and the Community

School councils must work on ways to spread information to the school community. Some ideas for school councils to use include the following:

- Create an annual school directory to communicate about your school, its programs, staff, special features, school council members and the school's objectives for the upcoming year.
- Cover school council and school activities in a newsletter published at regular intervals throughout the year.
- Ask teachers and parents to volunteer to make presentations to the board of education, family groups, civic groups and others about good things that are happening at the school.
- Post the minutes of school council meetings in a prominent place in the school, and distribute them widely.
- Communicate with high school families through the high school's student newspaper. The school council's student representative could write articles about what the school council is doing, or a regular reporter could cover school council meetings.
- Set up a school council booth at back-to-school nights or events, school open houses and family orientation sessions. Let families know they can serve as a school council member or on a school council committee.

**Directions:** Examine the parent involvement policies that follow. While reading the examples, consider the strengths, limitations, and opportunities for improvement.

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***ABC Elementary's Parent Involvement Policy (Example #1)***

[Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA); Title I, Part A (Section 1118) as amended for Every Student Succeeds Act (2016)]

*A Parent Involvement Policy is not a required policy area for all schools. However, if the school receives Federal Title I, Part A funds, the school council must have a policy.*

**Purpose:**

Parents serve as a key shareholder in the educational processes of the students attending ABC Elementary. The *Parent Involvement Policy* of ABC Elementary ensures equitable participation in the planning, reviewing, and implementing of all parent programs and activities.

**Parent Definition:**

A parent is legally defined as a *biological parent, step-parent, or a foster parent of a student or a person who has legal custody of a student pursuant to a court order and with whom the student resides.* For the purpose of this policy, *parent* encompasses *all* family situations.

**Parent Involvement Definition:**

Parent involvement is best defined as *any time a parent commits to assisting his/her child in learning and achieving academically to a higher level with greater interest and motivation.*

Parent involvement can be accomplished in a variety of ways, which include the following:

- reading together at home with your children,
- developing your expectations for your child and communicating these expectations to your child, as well as communicating your support in helping your child achieve these expectations,
- communicating positive values such as respect, hard work, and responsibility,
- providing your child with positive encouragement when he/she achieves certain goals,
- speaking with your child's teacher on a regular basis and offering any assistance that the teacher may suggest,
- becoming involved in the school's PTO/SBDM council and/or committees, and
- discussing your child's assessment scores after receiving the scores and an explanation of them from the school.

**Procedures:**

ABC Elementary, along with the district Federal Programs' Coordinator, shall convene an annual meeting at a time that is convenient for parents. All parents are invited and encouraged to attend. At this meeting, parents will be informed of the school's participation in a Title I Schoolwide Program, the purpose and requirements of Title I, and their right to be involved. Particular attention shall be given to reaching those parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background.

ABC Elementary shall involve parents in an organized, ongoing, and timely manner in the Title I planning, review, and improvement of programs; this includes the joint development of the school parent involvement policy.



### **Parent-School Learning Compact**

ABC Elementary and the parents of the students participating in the activities, services, and programs agree that improved student achievement is a shared responsibility. ABC Elementary and its parents will build and develop a partnership that will assist students in achieving proficiency.

#### ***ABC Elementary will...***

- provide high quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and effective learning environment that enables the participating students to meet Kentucky's student academic achievement standards,
- communicate clear expectations,
- utilize research-based materials and methods,
- provide a safe, positive, and healthy learning environment for each student, and
- address the individual needs of each student.

#### ***Parents will...***

- ensure their child attends school regularly, is punctual, and prepared to learn,
- create an atmosphere that supports learning,
- encourage their child to demonstrate respect for school personnel, classmates, and school property,
- remain informed about their child's education,
- model respect by going to the teacher first regarding concerns, and
- guarantee that any homework assignments are neat and complete.

#### ***Students will...***

- come to school on time and be prepared to learn,
- obey all school and classroom rules,
- pay attention to their teachers, tutors, and family members and ask for help when needed, and
- commit to learning and do their best work each day.

#### **Background Checks:**

Any parent wishing to serve as a parent volunteer in the school must complete a criminal background check and attend confidentiality training.

#### **Concerns:**

Any comments or concerns regarding ABC Elementary's *Parent Involvement Policy* shall be submitted to the Kentucky School District's Federal Programs' Coordinator, Mr. Kevin Stein. He can be reached at (859) 555-5555.

Date Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Reviewed/Revised: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Reviewed/Revised: \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Kentucky Middle School Parent-School Learning Compact (Example #2)***

The Kentucky Middle School and the parents of the students participating in the activities, services and programs agree that this compact outlines how the parents, the entire school staff, and the students will share the responsibility for improved student achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership that will assist student to achieve proficiency.

#### **School Responsibilities:**

Kentucky Middle School instructional staff will:

- Provide high quality curriculum and instruction in supportive and effective learning environment that enables the participating students to meet Kentucky's student academic achievement standards as follows:
  - Qualified teachers assuring all students have access to quality learning experiences appropriate to development.
  - Communicates clear expectations for performance to both students and parents.
  - All instruction utilizes research-based materials and methods.
  - Provides a safe, positive, healthy learning environment for each student where each child is treated with respect and dignity.
  - Address the individual needs of each student.
- Hold parent-teacher conferences and open house activities during which this compact will be discussed as it relates to the individual student's achievement.
- Provide parents with frequent reports on their child's progress and growth.
- Provide parents reasonable access to instructional staff before school and after scheduled classes for phone calls or parent conferences.
- Provide parent opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's curricular programming and for special projects.

#### **Parent Responsibilities**

I will support my child's learning in the following ways:

- Make sure that my child attends school regularly, is on time, and is prepared to learn.
- Make sure that any homework assignments are complete and neat.
- Create an atmosphere that supports learning.
- Encourage my child to demonstrate respect for school personnel, classmates and school property.
- Stay informed about my child's education
- Model respect by going to the teacher first about concerns.

#### **Student Responsibilities:**

I will share the responsibility to improve my academic achievement. Specifically, I will:

- Come to school on time and ready to learn.
- Pay attention to my teachers, tutors and family and ask for help when needed.
- Be prepared for school each day with completed and neat assignments and materials.
- Do my best work each day.
- Follow school and class rules.

Homeroom Teacher Signature:

Date:

Parent Signature:

Date:

Student Signature:

Date:

**Evaluation:**

The effectiveness of this policy shall be evaluated through the school improvement planning process.

Date Adopted:

Date Reviewed/Revised:

Date Reviewed/Revised:

**Discussion Question:**

Is there a policy that you favor over the other? Why or why not?

Have participants select one of the previous policies and reflect on its content. Share answers aloud as time allows. After adequate time has been given, read the highlighted section aloud to the group.

**Select one** of the previous two policies and answer the following reflection questions:

*What are the policy's strengths?*

ANSWERS WILL VARY.

*What are the policy's limitations?*

ANSWERS WILL VARY.

*How can the policy be improved?*

ANSWERS WILL VARY.

## Next Steps

Now that we have looked at barriers, relationship building, and the requirements of Title I, what are the next steps that your school council can do to encourage more parent, family and community engagement in the school?

The chart on the following page allows you to begin thinking about your *next steps*. The educator portion has been completed. How can the school council involve its families and community leaders in the school? How can all of these groups partner together to increase student achievement?

## Parents, Community Members, and Educators Partnering Together to Increase Student Achievement



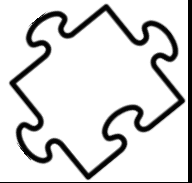
EDUCATORS		PARENTS
Policy Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train staff and school council members.</li> <li>• Facilitate meaningful, two-way involvement in development of plans to increase student achievement.</li> <li>• Include parent input in evaluating effectiveness of parent involvement policies.</li> <li>• Monitor compliance with parental involvement requirements.</li> </ul>	<p><i>How can the school council involve its families and community leaders in policy making?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train parents for school councils and advisory boards</li> <li>• Facilitate meaningful two-way involvement</li> <li>• Have parents/community members help monitor and evaluate effectiveness of parental involvement policies</li> </ul>
Recruit Parents and Community Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify, recruit and train staff on value of parent/community involvement.</li> <li>• Help educators assess needs and create “friendly” schools.</li> <li>• Train educators to understand data.</li> <li>• Train educators to train other educators and parents/community members.</li> </ul>	<p><i>How can the school council assist in recruiting and training parent/community leaders?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and recruit strong community candidates that represent the base</li> <li>• Train parents/community members in advocacy skills</li> <li>• Train parents/community members in understanding data</li> <li>• Train parents/community members to train others</li> </ul>
Communicate Rights, Responsibilities, and Opportunities to all Parents/Community Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate accountability data.</li> <li>• Inform educators about opportunities to involve parents and community members.</li> <li>• Inform about educators’ rights and roles in school improvement.</li> </ul>	<p><i>How can the school council help to communicate rights, responsibilities and opportunities to all parents/community members?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate timely accountability information</li> <li>• Inform all parents about opportunities for involvement at home and in school</li> <li>• Inform parents about rights and roles in school improvement in appropriate languages and formats</li> <li>• Provide materials and training to prepare parent to help their children to increase academic achievement</li> </ul>

### Preparing Parents, Community Members and Educators Together

After sufficient time has passed, share responses aloud. Ask if there are any lingering questions regarding the need to increase family and community engagement in the practices and processes of the school.

**Reflection:** *As you finish the course today, think about ideas that have been “Ah-Ha” moments or even “Oh-Wow” moments. What will you take back to your school council?*

Answers will vary.



Say:

*This concludes the required three (3) hour Family & Community Engagement training for experienced members. You may keep your training module booklet. Thank you for your participation and attention throughout this training. Your commitment to your school's council is invaluable. You will be issued an EILA certificate shortly, which signifies you have satisfied the required experienced member training.*



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